

Geographic Names Standardization Policy for Guatemala

United States Board on Geographic Names – Foreign Names Committee



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1. Introduction

The principal objective of the standardization policies presented below is to ensure consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in U.S. Government databases, publications, maps and charts. These policies are also intended to satisfy the statutory requirement levied upon the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in Public Law 242 of the 80th Congress (approved 25 July 1947)¹ to develop principles, policies, and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions regarding geographic nomenclature and orthography. The standardization policies contained in this document deal only with geographic names found in Guatemala, and shall be applied to all Guatemalan geographic names and feature records in the Geographic Names Database (GNDB) maintained for U.S. Government use by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA).

2. Languages and Language Policy

a. Demographics

The population of Guatemala is currently estimated at 14,099,032 persons.² According to 2001 census figures, 59.4 % of Guatemala's population is of mestizo or mixed Amerindian and European heritage. The rest of the population is composed of Mayan ethnic groups such as the K'iche' (9.1 %), Kaqchikel (8.4 %), Mam (7.9 %), and Q'eqchi' (6.3 %); other Mayan ethnic groups (8.6%), indigenous non-Mayan peoples (0.2 %), and other (0.1%).³

b. Languages

Spanish (ISO 639-3 language code 'spa') is the official language of Guatemala.⁴ According to 1995 figures, it is spoken by approximately 4,670,000 people.⁵

Other spoken languages include Ch'orti (ISO language code 'caa'), Kaqchikel (ISO language code 'cak'), K'iche' (ISO 639-3 language code 'quc'), Mam (ISO 639-3 language code 'mam'), Poqomam (ISO 639-3 language code 'poc'), and Q'eqchi' (ISO 639-3 language code 'kek'), which are affiliated with the Mayan language family. Moreover, Garifuna (ISO 639-3 language code 'cab'), which belongs to the Arawakan language family, is spoken by 16,700 persons residing mostly along the northeast coast of Guatemala.⁶

c. Geographic Names Standardization

A report submitted by the Guatemalan delegation during the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (1977) provides information on Guatemala's

¹ Public Law 242-80th Congress. NGA GEOnet Names Server (GNS) website. URL: http://earth-info.nga.mil/gns/html/public_law_80_242.htm (Accessed 11 June 2012).

² Guatemala. (29 November 2012). The World Factbook, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (Online). URL: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gt.html> (Accessed 23 July 2012).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Languages of Guatemala*. (2009). Ethnologue: Languages of the World (Online). Paul M. Lewis (Ed.). URL: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=GT (Accessed 23 July 2012).

⁶ Ibid.

national geographic names authority. According to this report, this authority resides within the Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN) “Ingeniero Alfredo Obiols Gómez.” The IGN Chief is also the *ex officio* Chief of Guatemala’s National Geographic Names Authority, which has been in operation since 1960.⁷

3. Toponymic Policies

a. Orthography

Geographic names standardization policy will follow Spanish orthographic conventions. Please refer to orthographic reference materials such as *Ortografía Básica de la Lengua Española* by the Real Academia Española (2012) and *Ortografía y Ortotipografía del Español Actual* by José Martínez de Sousa (2004) for additional information.

The user of Guatemalan geographic sources should be aware of the existence of variant place names in local languages other than Spanish, as well as various spellings resulting from attempts to render indigenous place names in accordance with Spanish orthographic rules.

b. Romanization

Romanization is not required.

c. Diacritics

Diacritics are shown in standardized names as they appear on native sources and in accordance with Spanish orthography. Uppercase letters in standardized name forms retain diacritics.

⁷ *National Standardization Authorities* – Submitted by the Republic of Guatemala. Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Athens. (23 June 1977) (Online). URL: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/3rd-uncsgn-docs/3uncgsn_econf69_L3_Abstract_e.pdf (Accessed 27 July 2012)

In accordance with Spanish orthography, the following diacritics are encountered in standardized names in Guatemala.

<u>Character Name</u>	<u>Character</u>	<u>Unicode Value</u>
Capital A with acute accent	Á	00C1
Capital E with acute accent	É	00C9
Capital I with acute accent	Í	00CD
Capital N with tilde	Ñ	00D1
Capital O with acute accent	Ó	00D3
Capital U with acute accent	Ú	00DA
Capital U with dieresis	Ü	00DC
Small a with acute accent	á	00E1
Small e with acute accent	é	00E9
Small i with acute accent	í	00ED
Small n with tilde	ñ	00F1
Small o with acute accent	ó	00F3
Small u with acute accent	ú	00FA
Small u with dieresis	ü	00FC

d. Generic Terms

A generic is a term used to describe a geographic feature. Examples include words such as ‘river,’ ‘hill,’ and ‘lake.’ If the generic term does not identify the feature, the term should be considered a false generic and should not be collected in the GNDB as a generic. Finally, generic terms are not collected for populated places in Guatemala.

A glossary of generic terms for Guatemala is available in Appendix A.

e. Hyphenation, Capitalization, and Spelling

The definite article (el, la, lo, los, las) is generally collected as part of the approved name as found on native sources (i.e., *Cerro El Duende*, *Río Las Escobas*). When source evidence regarding the capitalization of the definite article is mixed, names of associated features (if present) can assist in deciding whether to accept or reject a particular name. When a name is encountered in all capital letters, any definite article found beyond the initial position will be entered in lowercase when the standardized name is derived. For example, VALLE DE LA MARIPOSA should be entered in the GNDB as *Valle de la Mariposa*. In the absence of conclusive evidence, definite articles found beyond the initial position should be entered in lowercase letters as part of the standardized name form (i.e., *Cerro Agua de las Minas*, *Colonia Altos de la Cruz*).

f. Numbers

Names containing cardinal or ordinal numerals should be treated according to the following guidelines:

- Arabic numbers are generally expanded in Spanish. Examples: *Finca Salamá Número 2* (on source) should be written as *Finca Salamá Número Dos*; *Chulumal Iero*. (on source) should be written as *Chulumal Primero*.

- Roman numerals are retained throughout
- These guidelines apply to numerals found in both initial and non-initial positions

g. Optional Long and Short Forms

Short forms are not added to variant names in the GNDB.

Administrative division names are accorded long and short forms. Example: *Departamento de Chiquimula* [long form]; *Chiquimula* [short form].

Long and short forms for names of populated places are approved when supported by official evidence. Example: *Santa Cruz La Laguna* [long form]; *Santa Cruz* [short form].

Railroad station names that appear on official sources with the generic term *Estación* are given long and short forms as supported by the evidence. Example: *Estación Santa María* [long form]; *Santa María* [short form].

Distinguishing long forms for multiple populated places with the same name and in the same *Municipio* (Second-order Administrative Division) should be obtained from census lists and other official sources.

h. Unique Linguistic Situations

Names Containing the Conjunction “o”

Some sources may show a feature with two or more names joined by the conjunction “o” (or). Example: *Río Pinula o Negro*. For standardization purposes, only one name is selected as the official standard name. The name chosen as the approved name will depend on the weight of the available evidence. In the absence of additional sources, use the first name as the official standard name and any additional names as variant names.

i. Abbreviations

The following is a list of abbreviations of generics which are commonly found on Guatemalan cartographic products. Any abbreviations must be spelled out in the GNDB. Please see Appendix A for translations of all unabbreviated forms on this list.

<u>Abbreviated Form</u>	<u>Unabbreviated Form</u>
Bo.	Balneario, Barrio
C.	Cabo, Cerro
Cem.	Cementerio
Col.	Colonia
Depto.	Departamento
Fca.	Finca
Hda.	Hacienda
I.	Isla
L.	Lago
Lag.	Laguna

M.	Monte
Mun.	Municipalidad, Municipio
P.	Punta
Q., Qda.	Quebrada
R.	Río
Riach.	Riachuelo

4. Political Geography Policy

a. Country Name and Capital

Country Name

Conventional long form: Republic of Guatemala

Conventional short form: Guatemala

Approved long form: República de Guatemala

Approved short form: Guatemala

Capital (PPLC)

Approved name: Guatemala

Variant local name: Ciudad de Guatemala

Variant conventional name: Guatemala City

b. First-order Administrative Divisions

<u>Name</u>	<u>Generic</u>	<u>Seat</u>	<u>FIPS 10-4</u> ⁸	<u>ISO 3166-2</u> ⁹
1. Alta Verapaz	departamento	Cobán	GT01	GT-AV
2. Baja Verapaz	departamento	Salamá	GT02	GT-BV
3. Chimaltenango	departamento	Chimaltenango	GT03	GT-CM
4. Chiquimula	departamento	Chiquimula	GT04	GT-CQ
5. El Progreso	departamento	Guastatoya	GT05	GT-PR
6. Escuintla	departamento	Escuintla	GT06	GT-ES
7. Guatemala	departamento	Guatemala (PPLC)	GT07	GT-GU
8. Huehuetenango	departamento	Huehuetenango	GT08	GT-HU
9. Izabal	departamento	Puerto Barrios	GT09	GT-IZ
10. Jalapa	departamento	Jalapa	GT10	GT-JA
11. Jutiapa	departamento	Jutiapa	GT11	GT-JU
12. Petén	departamento	Flores	GT12	GT-PE
13. Quetzaltenango	departamento	Quetzaltenango	GT13	GT-QZ
14. Quiché	departamento	Santa Cruz del Quiché	GT14	GT-QC
15. Retalhuleu	departamento	Retalhuleu	GT15	GT-RE
16. Sacatepéquez	departamento	Antigua Guatemala	GT16	GT-SA

⁸ *Countries, Dependencies, Areas of Special Sovereignty, and their Principal Administrative Divisions*, Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS), Publication 10-4 (1995) (Online), URL: <http://www.itl.nist.gov/fipspubs/fip10-4.htm> (Accessed 14 June 2012).

⁹ *Departments of Guatemala*. Statoids (Online), URL: <http://www.statoids.com/ugt.html> (Accessed 23 July 2012).

17. San Marcos	departamento	San Marcos	GT17	GT-SM
18. Santa Rosa	departamento	Cuilapa	GT18	GT-SR
19. Sololá	departamento	Sololá	GT19	GT-SO
20. Suchitepéquez	departamento	Mazatenango	GT20	GT-SU
21. Totonicapán	departamento	Totonicapán	GT21	GT-TO
22. Zacapa	departamento	Zacapa	GT22	GT-ZA

c. Disputed Territories

Note: For the latest information on country-specific boundary disputes, please visit the Boundaries and Sovereignty Encyclopedia (B.A.S.E.), U.S. Department of State (Online), URL: <http://base.us-state.osis.gov/home.asp>.

International Disputes

The border between Guatemala and Belize is classified as ‘demarcated but insecure’ due to Guatemala’s ongoing claims over Belizean territory, which have ranged over the years from the entire country of Belize to only those lands south of the Sibun River. Indeed, the border has been demarcated and resurveyed as a ‘Line of Adjacency’ as recently as 2002. The Organization of American States (OAS) has offered to mediate between the two countries, with all unresolved territorial issues to be eventually submitted to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Previously Guatemala rejected referral to the ICJ, opting instead for OAS mediation while advocating continuing negotiations with Belize.¹⁰ However, as of December 2008, Belize and Guatemala had signed a special agreement paving the way for the ICJ to assist both countries in providing “final and binding determination” of their land and sea boundaries.¹¹ Finally, and in order to address Guatemala’s limited access to the Caribbean Sea, the OAS has recommended a maritime corridor which would require the consent of the Belizean and Honduran governments.¹²

Domestic Disputes

None reported

5. Source Material

a. Preferred Sources

The Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN) “Ingeniero Alfredo Obiols Gómez” possesses a substantial catalog of maps and other authoritative sources covering Guatemala. These IGN references should be considered as primary sources, followed by geographic sources produced by Guatemalan government agencies, academic institutions, and commercial vendors. The following list of preferred sources is not exhaustive, but it depicts some of the references to be

¹⁰ *Land Boundaries: Guatemala-Belize*. Boundaries and Sovereignty Encyclopedia (B.A.S.E.), U.S. Department of State (Online), URL: http://base.us-state.osis.gov/landBHome.asp?mode=details&pairDetailsId=123&pair=GUATEMALA_BELIZE&pairFIPS=GT_BH (Accessed 23 July 2012).

¹¹ *Belize-Guatemala Border Dispute to Go to ICJ*. (10 December 2008). Caribbean 360 (Online), URL: <http://www.caribbean360.com/index.php/news/14162.html#axzz2Eqv4Xtpy> (Accessed 12 December 2012).

¹² *Maritime Boundaries: Belize-Guatemala*. Boundaries and Sovereignty Encyclopedia (B.A.S.E.), U.S. Department of State (Online), URL: http://base.us-state.osis.gov/maritimeBHome.asp?mode=details&pairDetailsId=60&pair=GUATEMALA_BELIZE&pairFIPS=GT_BH (Accessed 23 July 2012).

used for geographic name selection. Some of the map series listed below have been produced jointly by Guatemala's Instituto Geográfico Militar or IGM (which merged with the IGN in 1964)¹³ and NGA and its predecessor organizations.

1. 1:12,500-scale maps, Series E954 (City Graphics), 1985 – 2007, IGN (Guatemala)
2. 1:50,000-scale maps, Series E754, 1961 – 2006, Dirección General de Cartografía/ IGM/ IGN (Guatemala)
3. *Diccionario Geográfico de Guatemala* [Geographic Dictionary of Guatemala] (multiple volumes). 1976 -, IGN
4. Map of Guatemala, 1:1,000,000-scale, 1985, IGM
4. *Guía Geográfica de Guatemala para Investigadores* [Guatemala Geographic Guide for Researchers]. 1978. Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) Publication No. 319. Published by the IGN.

b. Other Sources

1. Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN) [National Geographic Institute] “Ingeniero Alfredo Obiols Gómez” – Guatemala (Online), URL: <http://www.ign.gob.gt/paginaign/>
2. Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE) [National Institute of Statistics] – Guatemala (Online), URL: <http://www.ine.gob.gt/np/>
3. Guatemala Maps. Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, The University of Texas at Austin (Online), URL: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/guatemala.html>
4. *Geografía Visualizada* (Visualized Geography) – *Guatemala*. 2007. Julio Piedra Santa Arandi and Patricia J. Peralta. Editorial Piedra Santa, Guatemala.
5. *La Guía de Guatemala* (The Guatemala Guide). 2004. Gisystems (Ed.), Guatemala.
6. *Enciclopedia de Guatemala* (Encyclopedia of Guatemala). 1999. Volumes I – II. Oceano Grupo Editorial, Barcelona, Spain.

¹³ *Institución – Nuestros Inicios* (Institution – Our Beginnings). Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN) – Guatemala. URL: <http://www.ign.gob.gt/paginaign/Institución/NuestrosInicios.aspx> (Accessed 23 July 2012).

Appendix A. Glossary of Generic Terms

The following is an incomplete list of common generic terms one may encounter in Guatemalan geographic names sources.

<u>Spanish Generic</u>	<u>Designation Name</u>	<u>Designation Code</u>
aeropuerto	airport	AIRP
aguada(s)	waterhole(s)	WTRH
aldea, caserío, ranchería	populated place	PPL
área arqueológica, sitio arqueológico	ancient site	ANS
arroyo, brazo, quebrada, toma	stream, intermittent stream	STM, STMI
bahía, ensenada	bay	BAY
balneario	resort	RSRT
barra	bar, sandbar	BAR
barrio, colonia, lotificación, residencial(es), urbanización	section of populated place	PPLX
borde	levee	LEV
cabo	cape	CAPE
campamento	camp	CMP
campo	field	FLD
canal	canal	CNL
cascada(s)	waterfall(s)	FLLS
cayo(s), isla(s), islote(s)	island(s)	ISL(S)
cementerio	cemetery	CMTY
cerro(s), loma(s), monte(s)	hill(s)	HLL(S)
cerro(s), montaña(s)	mountain(s)	MT(S)
cueva(s), gruta(s)	cave(s)	CAVE
cumbre	peak	PK
departamento	department, first-order administrative division	ADM1
embalse, presa	reservoir	RSV
embarcadero	pier	PIER
ensenada	cove	COVE
estación	railroad station	RSTN
estero	estuary	ESTY
faro	lighthouse	LTHSE
finca, granja	farm	FRM
golfo	gulf	GULF
hacienda, ranchería	ranch	RNCH
labor(es)	orchard(s)	OCH
lago, laguna, pampa	lake	LK
laguna, laguneta	lagoon	LGN
lotificación, parcelamiento	estate	EST
mina	mine	MN

municipio	municipality, second-order administrative division	ADM2
pampa(s)	marsh(es)	MRSH
parque	park	PRK
paso	pass, mountain pass	PASS
pista de aterrizaje	airfield	AIRF
plan(es)	plain(s)	PLN
playa	beach	BCH
poza	pool	POOL
pozo	well	WLL
presa	dam	DAM
puente	bridge	BDG
puerto	port	PRT
punta	point	PT
quebrada	ravine	RVN
reservación	reserve	RES
riachuelo, río	stream	STM
ruina(s)	ruin(s)	RUIN
salina(s)	salt evaporation pond(s)	MFGN
sierra	mountains, mountain range	MTS
sierra	ridge	RDGE
vado	ford	FORD
valle	valley	VAL
volcán	volcano	VLC
zanjón	ditch	DTCH
zona	area, locality	LCTY